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13 April 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

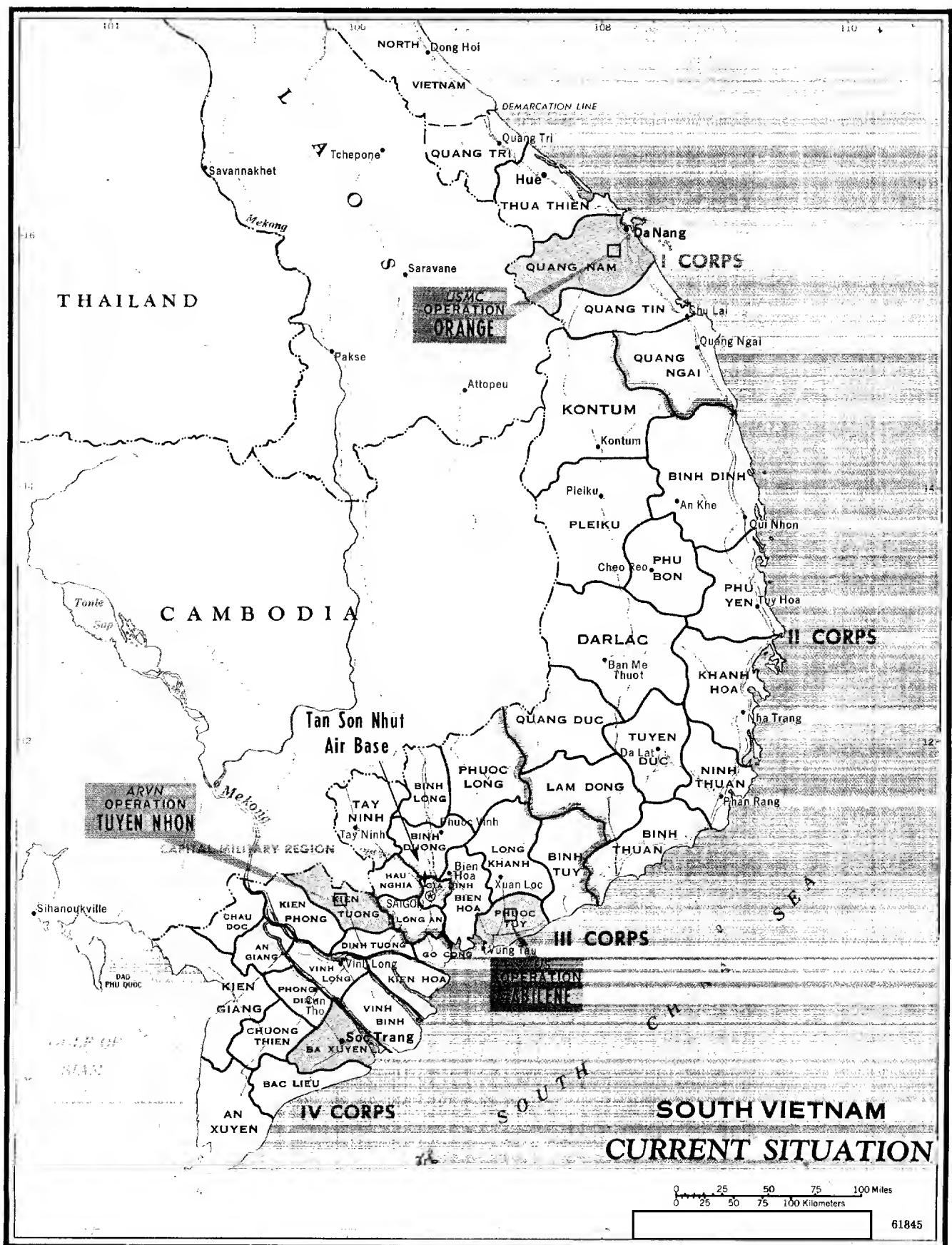
[The Political Situation in South Vietnam: Premier Ky is increasingly subject to conflicting pressures from members of the government, who are divided over how best to handle the current crisis.]

[Ky has reversed a decision he made on 8 April to replace National Police Director Lieu, and has asked Lieu to remain in office for 90 days. Earlier, seven cabinet members had threatened to resign if Ky followed through on his decision. These officials, who favor the building of a broad consensus to settle the political crisis, believe that Lieu can provide important contacts with non-governmental figures, including moderate Buddhist leaders and General Thi.]

[On the other extreme, there have been reports of the emergence of a group of field-grade officers who are becoming increasingly impatient with the government's lack of action against political dissidents. One leading member of this group has expressed the opinion that Lieu cannot be trusted, and others also probably favor his dismissal.]

There has been no firm information on the attitudes of delegates to the government's National Political Congress, but earlier information suggested the congress might endorse the government's formula for a constitution drafting body, half appointed from important power groups and half drawn from the elected provincial and municipal councils. In addition to demonstrations protesting the congress yesterday in Hue and Da Nang, there are reports that Buddhist leaders in Saigon are preparing for major antigovernment demonstrations, possibly tomorrow when the National Political Congress is due to terminate.

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The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Communist military activity, which has shown signs of renewed aggressiveness since the weekend, flared up sharply yesterday with a major enemy mortar attack against Saigon's Tan Son Nhut air base. According to preliminary reports, seven US personnel were killed and 106 wounded; South Vietnamese casualties number at least 40, including one civilian who was killed. In addition, at least 62 aircraft were damaged or destroyed, and numerous airfield structures and POL storage facilities set ablaze.

In Phuoc Tuy Province southeast of Saigon, enemy resistance to search-and destroy Operation ABILENE being conducted by six battalions of the US 1st Infantry Division, has stiffened considerably. In separate engagements yesterday with an estimated Viet Cong battalion and platoon, two US companies sustained casualties of 34 killed, 60 wounded, and four missing. Confirmed enemy losses were nine killed.

Viet Cong terrorists also stepped up their activity yesterday, detonating mines and grenades against two ARVN Ranger compounds, one in Saigon and the other in Soc Trang in the delta province of Ba Xuyen. Combined friendly casualties totaled two killed (one civilian) and 35 wounded (18 civilians).

ARVN forces have terminated Operation TUYEN NHON, a two-company ground sweep targeted against a Viet Cong battalion, which had attacked a Special Forces camp in Kien Tuong Province near the Cambodian border. Cumulative enemy losses were estimated to number 228 killed (140 confirmed by body count) plus an estimated 100 wounded by armed helicopter strikes supporting the operation. Friendly casualties were placed at 28 killed (1 US), 24 wounded (2 US), and five missing.

Battalion-strength US Marine task force elements have terminated Operation ORANGE, southwest of Da Nang in Quang Nam Province, after 11 days. Fifty-seven Viet Cong were killed, in contrast to marine losses of 18 killed and 92 wounded.

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Other Communist Military Developments: Chinese Communist MIG fighters on 12 April apparently shot down an unarmed US Navy refueling aircraft which inadvertently overflew the Luichow Peninsula in South China. The Navy KA-3B Skywarrior with a crew of four apparently went down off the South China coast. The plane was en route to its carrier in the Gulf of Tonkin from the Philippines.

Peking's initial announcement concerning the shootdown factually reported the details of the incident. On 13 April, however, a People's Daily editorial added the customary charge that the incident constituted a serious military provocation against China. The paper demanded "severe punishment for the US provocateurs" who are engaging in "increasingly frequent and frenzied provocations" against China.

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Greece: Foreign Minister Tsirimokos' resignation over Cyprus policy on 11 April has further shaken the weak Stephanopoulos government.

Tsirimokos has differed with Premier Stephanopoulos on the extent of control the Greek Government should have over the Cypriot armed forces. He supported Cyprus President Makarios' earlier demand for at least peacetime control of the Cypriot National Guard. The Greek Government's position apparently falls short of this and allows the commander in chief, General Grivas, a firm hand in all Cyprus' military affairs.

At least two other parliamentary deputies are expected to withdraw their support from the government. This would wipe out Stephanopoulos' parliamentary majority. However, at least one deputy from the opposition Center Union reportedly has renounced his backing of ex-Premier Papandreu and come out in favor of Stephanopoulos. If others follow suit, Stephanopoulos would get another reprieve.

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NOTES

Communist China - Indonesia: Peking's 12 April note demanding that Indonesia immediately arrange for the repatriation of all Overseas Chinese who wish to go to Communist China appears designed to discredit the new Djakarta government and to improve Peking's image among the Overseas Chinese. If significant numbers of Chinese should seek repatriation, Indonesia would be in no position to comply with Peking's demand that it provide transportation to the Chinese mainland. Anti-Chinese activity has continued on a fairly wide scale throughout Indonesia in recent weeks, with at least some of it apparently officially encouraged.

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Pakistan - Communist China: The Pakistani Government, aided by extreme left-wing groups, is working to stage an enthusiastic welcome for Chinese Communist President Liu Shao-chi on his arrival on 15 April for a two-day visit to East Pakistan. The bulk of the population, however, appears apathetic or even hostile to the visit, and the non-Communist opposition parties are refusing to cooperate with the government. Although it is unlikely Liu will be the object of the almost hysterical adulation he encountered during his tour of West Pakistan late last month, the government will probably be able to organize an impressive reception, and anti-US overtones could develop.

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Finland: Official discussions on the formation of a postelection government will start after the new parliament convenes on 14 April. Social Democratic Party chairman Paasio, leader of the largest party in parliament since last month's elections, will play a central role. His principal effort is likely to be directed toward reaching agreement with President Kekkonen's Center (Agrarian) Party on an economic program as the basis for a coalition government, but this will be difficult in view of the opposing economic interests represented by the two parties. Moscow has reported without comment on the election results, but it is doubtful if Premier Kosygin would have scheduled a visit to Helsinki this June if Soviet leaders were much concerned with the turn of events in Finland.

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The Special Assistant for National Security Affairs

The Scientific Adviser to the President

The Director of the Budget

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The Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Counselor and Chairman of the Policy Planning Council

The Director of Intelligence and Research

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The Secretary of the Treasury

The Under Secretary of the Treasury

The Department of Defense

The Secretary of Defense

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Secretary of the Army

The Secretary of the Navy

The Secretary of the Air Force

The Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs)

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Chief of Naval Operations, United States Navy

Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

Chief of Staff, United States Army

Commandant, United States Marine Corps

U.S. Rep., Military Committee and Standing Group, NATO

Supreme Allied Commander, Europe

Commander in Chief, Pacific

Commander in Chief, Atlantic

The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

The Director, The Joint Staff

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

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The Federal Bureau of Investigation

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